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## Report of Special March Meeting of the International Peace Bureau.

By Carl Heath.

The General Assembly of the International Peace Union met on March 18 at the University in Berne. There were present delegates from Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, Russia, Sweden, and Switzerland. . . .\*

The morning of March 18 was devoted to a discussion of the report of the Bureau and the new rules of the International Congress. Very little arose upon the report. It had been agreed in the Council meeting on the previous two days that the question of the journal *The Peace Movement* be referred to a special committee, great objection having been expressed to the expenditure upon the editions of this magazine in three languages.

On the rules of the Congress Mr. F. Maddison strongly opposed the new rule, permitting twenty-five delegates to block a resolution from one or other of the three sections into which the Congress will in future be divided. The proposal was amended in the sense that these twenty-five delegates must represent at least five different countries; but the rule in any form is open to serious abuse, and it is no sufficient reply that questions thus blocked will come up as of right in full Congress a year later.

The equality of the three languages in use in the Congress—English, French, and German—is to be maintained. French will, however, be the official language in respect to the wording of resolutions and other official statements.

There will be six General Committees, or Commissions, of the Congress as heretofore, namely, A, Actualities; B, International Law; C, Propaganda; D, Armament; E, Education; and F, Economic Questions. These will be appointed by the Bureau and will prepare the work on the first two days. They will be followed by meetings of the three Sections. The questions coming from Commissions A and B will go to Section I, Juridic and Political Questions; those from D and F to Section II, Economic and Armament Questions; those from C and E to Section III, Education and Propaganda. These three Sections will sit at the same time, so that delegates will have to determine beforehand which groups of questions they desire to follow in detail. Finally the Commissions and Sections will report to the Congress in full session. Certain main questions will, however, come direct to the Congress. It remains to be seen how far these new plans will prove satisfactory in the working. Delegates from recognized Peace Societies will alone have votes, but it is to be noted that in future Peace Committees of non-Peace Societies will be officially recognized as Peace Societies and accorded the right of such societies.

The program for the Congress at Vienna promises to be a very full one.

The session which should have been held in the afternoon was dropped, owing to the arrangements for the

funeral of the late Director of the Bureau, Dr. Albert Gobat. This took place in the Aula of the University, which was crowded, and a series of fine orations were made by representative men, concluding with that of M. La Fontaine, the President of the Bureau. All the delegates at the Assembly were present.

On March 19 the morning session was devoted to the consideration of the new statutes of the International Peace Union, as it will in future be known. It is not possible to treat these in detail, but among the main points to be noted are: (1) That in future the Union will consist of two classes of members—(a) *membres actifs* and (b) *membres adhérents*. The first category will include Peace Societies and official bodies (States and municipalities granting subventions to the Union). These alone will be entitled to votes. The second category will consist of associations and institutions not having peace for their main object and of individual persons. (2) The proposal of the National Peace Council to increase the Commission or Council of the Union to fifty members was supported by Mr. G. H. Perris in an able speech, and, though strongly opposed, was finally adopted by a large majority on a card vote, Herr Fried (Austria) and M. Émile Arnaud (France) giving their support to the English proposition. In future, however, the Council will retire by thirds every year—that is, members will be elected for three years, one-third being elected annually. The proposal of the Peace Council as to the nomination of candidates by the societies and the publication of the complete list in the *Peace Movement* two months before the Assembly was also adopted. (3) In future all Peace Societies that are members of the Union will pay to the Union at the rate of five centimes, or halfpenny or cent, per member, with a minimum subscription of five francs. One vote will be accorded for every 100 members, with a maximum of twenty votes. (4) The voting list will be in alphabetical form, a list for each nationality. This latter rule is for clearness in voting, since not more than five members can be elected to the Council from any one country. The alphabetical list was pressed for by one of the English members as the only fair form in which to print the voting paper, and was finally adopted as above.

The Assembly at Berne may thus be said to have accomplished some good work in the direction of improving materially the organization of the Bureau and of the Congress, even if the results did not answer to all the desires of the English delegation. It may at least be said that the statutes as now established form a working basis of a considerably improved character, and since it is open to the Council of the Union to propose such further amendments from time to time as experience may prove the need of, the Union should now move forward with a new vigor and on a firmer representative and financial basis. The National Peace Council may at least feel that the efforts it and its International Organization Committee have put forward for reform have not been in vain, ably supported as these efforts were by so many of our Continental and American colleagues.

\* The American members of the Commission of the International Peace Bureau, henceforth to be called the International Peace Union, are Dr. Samuel T. Dutton, Edwin D. Mead, Mrs. Fannie Fern Andrews, and Benjamin F. Trueblood, three of whom appointed Mr. Carl Heath as their proxy at the meeting of the Commission which occurred March 16 and 17, preceding the General Assembly.

"God of the nations, near and far,  
Ruler of all mankind,  
Bless Thou Thy people as they strive  
The paths of peace to find."

—John Haynes Holmes.